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RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
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STATE FOR NEA/ARP; NEA/PPD; NEA/RA; INR/R/MR; PA; INR/NESA; INR/B;
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WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE; NSC
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA
USCINCCENT FOR POLAD
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E.O. 12958: N/A
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: LEBANON

¶1. Summary: The unsigned editorial in "Al-Bayan" considers UNSCR 1701 doomed to failure. A UAE columnist in "Al-Ittihad" examines the impact of Iranian aid to Lebanon through Hezbollah. A UAE businessman wondered in "Al-Bayan" when the Americans will realize that they were not Arabs' friends and emphasized that Americans should review their relationship with Israel. An unsigned editorial in "Al-Khaleej" considered President Bush's call for a new UN Resolution to disarm Hezbollah as the first drop in the ocean of the new Middle East. End Summary.

¶2. On 08/23, Emirati columnist Mohammed Al-Hammadi wrote in his column in the Abu Dhabi-based semi-official Arabic-language daily "Al-Ittihad" (circulation 65,000):

"... The financial assistance promised by the Arab States to reconstruct Lebanon, which was stressed by the Arab Foreign Ministers at their meeting a few days ago, should not be delayed or be transferred at a turtle's pace. The Lebanese suffering and their substantial losses cannot withstand the typical bureaucracy from our Arab institutions. This is especially true because Iran, a competing State in the region, has immediately sent its cash assistance to the Lebanese through "Hizbullah" in front of all the major satellite channels. We must admit that the Iranian funds have succeeded in having a psychological and moral impact on the hearts of the Lebanese people. The tangible effects will show within a few weeks with the Lebanese rebuilding their own houses."

¶3. Dubai-based Arabic daily "Al-Bayan," (circulation 85,000) 08/23 editorialized:

"There is no reason to adopt a resolution calling for a second international resolution, unless the objective is to grant Israel what it has failed to obtain through its aggression, massacres, destruction and displacement... Those who seek to pass a new resolution by the Security Council in favor of Israel should first protect Resolution 1701... Israel's continuing violations could ignite the situation again in a way that could exceed what happened during the previous days of the aggression."

¶4. UAE Businessman, Khalaf Ahmed Al-Habtoor, wrote in his op-ed in Dubai-based Arabic daily "Al-Bayan," (circulation 85,000) on 08/23:

"... Some Americans are becoming obsessed with this question: "Why do they hate us?" when they watch satellite channels showing Arabs and Muslims burning American flags... George W. Bush, for his own

objectives, wants us to believe that extremist elements hate democracy and freedom. However, the Pentagon published a 2004 report on its website in greater openness. It says: "Muslims do not hate our freedom, but dislike our policies. The vast majority of them express their objections against what they see as biased support to Israel against Palestinian rights. Therefore, when addressing American public diplomacy efforts to introduce democratic Islamic societies, Muslims see only hypocrisy in the service of American interests." This is true. Arabs and Muslims' anger simmers because of the American bias in favor of Israel, which is evident every time the United Nations through the Security Council tries to reach a resolution condemning Israel. It simmers every time we see the United States use its right of veto, which is often the sole opposing voice. It is time now for the United States to revert to the role of impartial mediator, which it had previously played and reconsider the nature of its country's relations with Israel. There is no doubt that the day will come when Americans will question whether Israel is really one of their most loyal friends or that it is just befriending America, so long as America continues to support it financially, wage wars on its behalf, and turn a blind eye to the war crimes it commits."

15. Sharjah-based Arabic-language daily "Al-Khaleej" editorialized on 8/23/06 (circulation 90,000):

"U.S. President George W. Bush wants to pass a new resolution at the United Nations Security Council to disarm Hezbollah in Lebanon, while his partner, Prime Minister of the Zionist entity, Ehud Olmert seeks to hold a dialogue with the Lebanese government to normalize relations between Lebanon and the Zionist entity. These two things are like one drop in the new sea of the Middle East, which America wants to place on the remains of the Arab world... The catastrophic part of all this is that everything is publicly declared, and yet

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some continue to believe and wager that Bush's era can carry peace. Reality and the Arabs' experience shows that Arabs during Bush's era will only see wars, embargoes and sanctions. The neoconservatives will not change their schemes or their perceptions through any means... There is no alternative except for the Arabs to start thinking about protecting themselves during this period."

QUINN